Akha A04
Miao AE5

M 185 858 /81/ One blacksmith was trying to educate his son to become an even better man at the same trade. One mother wanted her daughter to develop into a good batik designer. Another father wanted his son "to be made into a brave and industrious man"; a third father wished him to be "capable and clever." As was said, among the Meau the ideal factor always came before the material one. Only once did I receive the answer: "May he become clever and rich." In the case of girls, little value was placed upon intelligence and beauty; it was hoped that they would best master women's work and become industrious women who would have many children.

A 185 858 The Akha are much more materialistic than the Meau. They, too, love their children tenderly, and what was said about the Meau in this respect generally also applies to them. Nevertheless, when I also questioned as many Akha as possible, they often replied that children were needed since they could help with the work, an answer which, as was pointed out, I received only once from my Meau informants. Accordingly, materialistic considerations are always in the foreground in the plans for the future of the children among the Akha. Among them the mothers usually declared that they wished their sons to become so industrious and skillful that they would be able to support a family well. The idea of security was thus the foremost consideration in these replies, as well as in the ones which I shall not specifically quote. In only one case did an Akha father wish that his son would become a good physician, "because health is the most important thing in life." Despite their obviously happy youth, the adult Meau talk of it only rarely, the Akha almost never. Men might perhaps describe how they obtained their first gun or how they shot their first muntjac and the like, and women remember as an impressive moment of their childhood how they cooked alone for the first time or how the mother explained batik work or the use of the loom to them.

A M 159 868